

The Jungle Hut Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141105
Inspection date	02 October 2007
Inspector	Carole Argles
Setting Address	St. Gregorys C of E Primary School, New Street, Marnhull, Sturminster Newton, Dorset, DT10 1PZ
Telephone number	01258 820634
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Registered person	The Trustees of Marnhull Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Jungle Hut Pre School opened approximately 30 years ago and is run by a trustee committee. It operates from its own premises which are situated in the grounds of St Gregory's C E V A First School, in Marnhull, near Sturminster Newton, Dorset. The premises has three playrooms, cloakrooms, kitchen and an office area. There is an enclosed outside play area and children also use parts of the school grounds.

The pre-school is registered to provide care for 18 children aged two to five years. There are currently 35 children aged from two to five years on roll. This includes 19 children who receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently no children on roll who have learning difficulties or disabilities. The pre-school support children for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school operates five days a week during school term times and is open from 08.30 until 15.30 and until 16.30 on Monday afternoons.

There are six staff working with the children, of whom five hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Suitable procedures are in place to reduce the likelihood of infection spreading between children and to help keep them fit. The premises, equipment and toys are kept clean and the staff wipe the tables before and after the children eat. Satisfactory nappy changing procedures are implemented and paper towels are provided for hand drying. The children develop good hand hygiene routines and know that this is important to remove germs. All staff hold a current first aid certificate and this helps them to provide appropriate support for a child in the event of an accident. Suitable accident records and medication records are maintained and staff ensure relevant information is passed on to their parents.

A drinking water dispenser is readily available and the children take drinks whenever they are thirsty. They receive a suitable mid-session snack which usually consists of a biscuit or breadstick and a small piece of fruit. Parents provide a packed lunch for their child and are reminded of the importance of providing ice packs to help keep the food fresh. The children find out about the importance of eating a healthy diet through activities and discussions with the staff. They learn about good dental care and talk about which foods help to keep them fit. They grow vegetables, such as lettuces, tomatoes and potatoes which they sometimes have the opportunity to eat.

The children usually play outside in the fresh air daily and bring coats to so they can go out if the weather is chilly. They use a suitable range of equipment such as wheeled toys, balls and a climbing frame to support their physical development. More challenging apparatus is available in the school grounds. Many children show a developing awareness of their personal space as they sit and play together or crawl through the climbing frame. They are gaining good control and coordination of their movements and enjoy jumping and moving to music and action rhymes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are made welcoming to children as staff set out a range of activities before they arrive and provide coat pegs labelled with each child's photograph. Many posters are displayed on the walls. Generally staff make effective use of the somewhat restricted space by having areas for creative activities, pretend play and quieter activities and books. They clear away equipment to allow children to move more freely, for example, when they want to sing or move to music. However, at times staff do not consider how to use space differently, for example, when they are unable to go outside because of rain. There is a wide range of toys and activities to support all areas of children's development and sufficient child-size furniture. Many resources are stored on shelves in boxes labelled with pictures so that the children know what is inside. However, children are rarely encouraged to initiate their own play and make choices about what they use.

The children's safety is well supported by the staff. They have a sound understanding of safety issues and take action to minimise risk of accidental injury to the children. They keep the premises secure and are careful to ensure that children are only collected by people authorised by their parents. Risk assessments are carried out and the staff check the building and outside areas daily. The children are well supervised at all times. Suitable fire safety procedures are in place and all children and staff practise the evacuation drill so they know how to act in an

emergency. The children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe. They are reminded of the possible consequences of their actions, for example, what may happen if they run inside the building or if too many of them use the climbing frame at once. There are role play activities and talks from a police officer help them learn the importance road safety.

Staff have a satisfactory understanding of their role in safeguarding children and they understand what they must do if they have concerns about the welfare of a child in their care. They ensure that children do not have unsupervised contact with anyone who has not been vetted. This contributes well to protecting the children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children come happily into the pre-school and settle quickly at the activities. Those who are reluctant to separate from their carer are given extra support by the staff. Most children have a relaxed relationship with staff and talk readily about themselves and their families and about what they are doing. They talk and play cooperatively with others, sometimes deciding to play games such as hide-and-seek together. The children use their imaginations well in the pretend play area and staff ask them questions to encourage them to talk further about their ideas. However, at times, some younger or less confident children do not receive sufficient support to encourage them to interact with staff or their peers or to join in the activities.

The children take part in a wide range of activities and within the routine of the session there is a balance of opportunities for them to choose what they do and for adult-led group times. When the weather allows, staff use the outside area well to extend the play and resources available, for example, by offering the climbing frame and sand tray. However, sometimes they do not consider fully how they can use space inside the building flexibly to provide a wider variety of activities for the children. For parts of the session, for example story times, the children are divided into two groups and this allows staff to provide activities more appropriate to their ability. The staff frequently observe what the children can do and record their development. At present, there is no key person system in place to ensure that this is carried out consistently for all children or that the information gathered is used effectively to inform the planning. Few activities are specifically planned with the youngest children in mind and their needs are not always met by the staff.

The children receive praise for their achievements and they are encouraged to be independent with their personal care. They put on their coats before going outside. They pour their drinks at snack time and staff give them confidence to do this by telling them that it does not matter if some spills on the table. After they have finished eating their lunch, the children remain sitting at the tables and are not offered choice of activities. Consequently some children show limited interest in what is provided for them.

Nursery Education

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff plan and provide a programme of activities which covers all areas of the curriculum. There are interesting activities to increase children's knowledge of the world around them and find out about nature. For example, they watch caterpillars change into butterflies; they plant seeds and care for plants and know that they need to water them so they grow. The staff observe the children to assess their development and they record their progress towards the early learning goals. However, as this is not carried out consistently for all children, it does not allow staff to plan the next steps in each child's

learning effectively. The written plans often lack detail and do not focus on the outcomes for learning. Frequently the staff can describe how they intend to use the activities but do not always put this into practice. For example, when children are sorting objects by shape, size and colour, the staff sit and talk with them but they ask few questions which encourage them to think or solve problems. Although the staff supervise the children well, they do not always support the children's learning and, at times, there are insufficient staff working directly with a group of children to ensure that all are included.

The children are motivated to learn and often show good levels of concentration on the activities, for example, when they are painting or exploring the sand. They understand there are times to sit quietly and they join in enthusiastically with singing and action rhymes. Most children speak confidently and clearly with others, talking about real and imaginary ideas. They understand that marks can have meaning and many can recognise their names when finding their coat peg or their place mat at snack time. There are many activities which promote children's hand-eye coordination. They join construction pieces, thread objects and place small items such as sequins with care. They manipulate dough and use simple one-handed tools such as scissors with increasing skill. As a result they are developing the muscle control required for writing and some children are beginning to form recognisable letters and to write their names. Staff encourage this in meaningful ways, for example, by encouraging them to write their names on their pictures. The children enjoy stories and ask staff to read to them. They handle books with care and sometimes sit with friends in the book corner where they talk about the pictures together.

Art activities are provided for the children daily. They use chalks and paint and explore different ways of making marks on the paper with implements such as rollers, sponges and different sizes of brush. Although the children's independence is promoted in many ways, they have few opportunities to make their own decisions about what they do. Staff do not provide space so they can select and use the many activities and resources stored on the shelves. Often children have limited choice of materials for activities such as collage so they cannot try out their own ideas or use their imaginations freely. The children are interested in numbers and sometimes use them spontaneously in their play; for example, they decide to count up to ten while their friends go and hide. The children register themselves present when they arrive by placing their photograph under a number line and many can recognise the numerals and they talk about them with the staff. The children are beginning to count, correctly linking numbers to objects. However, some staff do not have a clear understanding of how to develop these skills by matching tasks to the ability of the child. However, overall the children enjoy what they do and are making satisfactory progress in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The children receive praise and encouragement for their achievements and this helps them develop good self-esteem. The children play cooperatively together and many have learnt to share fairly and take turns. They are eager to please and readily volunteer to give out the cups and food at snack times. They are polite to others and know that they should say please and thank you. Generally, they behave well and staff help them to understand why boundaries are in place. However, at times when they are not fully included in activities, or if they have lost interest, some children begin to show unwanted behaviour. Some staff do not consider why this is happening and are inconsistent in their expectations for the child's behaviour, giving them conflicting instructions.

There are many posters displayed on the walls and resources in use which show positive images of diversity. The children take part in activities which help them find out about their own culture and traditions and that of others. For example, they celebrate Christian festivals and talk about Chinese New Year. This begins to encourage them to develop an accepting attitude towards others in society. Children who speak English as an additional language receive satisfactory support. For instance, initially staff may use pictures to help the child communicate to help them understand what is happening and ensure that their needs are met. Staff, parents and other agencies work together to ensure that any children who have learning difficulties or disabilities receive appropriate support. Suitable systems are in place to plan and monitor their development and appropriate records are maintained.

Parents are asked to provide detailed information when their child starts at the preschool and this assists staff in providing appropriate care for the child and to respect the parents' wishes. Suitable information is given to parents so that they understand what will be offered to their child. Copies of the policies and procedures are available outside the building for them to read. Regular newsletters inform them of forthcoming events such as fundraising or outings. Children do not have a named key person to aid liaison between parents and staff. Although they exchange information about the children to ensure that they are comfortable and settled, the arrival and collection arrangements make this difficult at times.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory and this contributes towards the children's learning. Information about the Foundation Stage curriculum is available and copies of the weekly plans are kept outside the building so parents can find out about the activities offered to their child. Termly meetings between staff and parents provide opportunities for them to discuss the child's development records and their progress towards the early learning goals. Systems for sharing information daily are less effective so parents are unable to talk with the child about their achievements and what they have been doing. Staff makes few suggestions about how parents can support their child at home and consequently they are unable to become fully involved with their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The records, policies and procedures required to promote the children's safety and welfare are in place. There are sound procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with the children and the qualification requirements are met. The routines of the day run smoothly for the children because the staff work cooperatively together. There is a high ratio of adults to children and staff make sure that the children are well supervised at all times and this promotes their safety. However, at times, they are not deployed effectively to ensure that all children receive good levels of attention and support. The resources are well organised but children are rarely encouraged to select items independently and over the lunch hour they are offered no choice of activities.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. There are suitable appraisal systems in place to identify the staff's training needs and they frequently attend courses. All have a positive attitude towards the development of the pre-school and they readily implement new initiatives. They have recently reviewed the system of recording children's progress in conjunction with staff at the school. The staff have devised systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the nursery education but to date these are not fully effective. They meet weekly to evaluate and plan the activities. However, the plans often lack detail and do not focus sufficiently on the

outcomes for children's learning so staff do not have a clear understanding of how to use the activities. Although staff assess and record the children's progress, this is not done regularly for every child. Therefore staff cannot be sure that all are making good progress towards the early learning goals or use this information to help plan the next steps in their learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, the provider agreed to devise an action plan showing how staff qualification requirements would be met; to revise some procedures and make copies of policy and procedure documents readily available to parents, and to ensure that staff have a good understanding of safeguarding children issues. The provider also agreed to develop procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of the nursery education; to review the deployment of staff, to increase the staff's understanding of how to support children's learning effectively, and to keep parents well informed about their child's development and increase their involvement with their learning.

Since then, the provider has taken action to enhance the children's safety and welfare. Staff have undertaken training and most now hold an appropriate childcare qualification. The minimum requirements are now exceeded. The required policies and procedures have been reviewed and amended appropriately. Parents now have ready access to a file containing all policy documents. Information in the pre-school prospectus clearly states where this can be found. Staff have a sound understanding of their role in safeguarding children and continue to undertake training to consolidate their knowledge and awareness of these issues.

Procedures to monitor and evaluate the nursery education provision have been put in place. The staff meet frequently to evaluate the activities and they have revised systems for observing what the children can do and recording their progress. The manager has reviewed the deployment of staff and revised the planning and the routines of the day. Staff demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, to date this action is not fully effective and at times staff do not maximise opportunities to support the children's learning.

Parents now have the opportunity to meet with staff each term to discuss their child's progress and view their development records. However, systems are not in place to assist in the day to day exchange of information and to help parents become more involved with their child's learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop the partnership with parents and carers to facilitate the exchange of information and to ensure that they are fully involved in their child's learning [also applies to Nursery Education]
- ensure that staff have a clear understanding of how to meet the needs of the youngest children and ensure that they are fully involved in activities

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to review the systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the nursery education to ensure the children's learning is well supported
- review the deployment of staff and use of the premises and resources to ensure that the children's individual needs are met at all times (also applies to Childcare)

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk